

ABSTRACT

A wafer having a top surface including a first material such as silicon dioxide or silicon nitride and a second material such as polysilicon or copper is etched so as to leave elements formed from the second material projecting above the surrounding surface defined by the first material. An opaque layer may be applied over the newly-formed top surface covered by a transparent layer such as a photoresist. The opaque layer has raised features corresponding to the projecting features formed from the second material. These raised features provide contrast and allow an optical system to locate the wafer as, for example, in registering the wafer in a wafer stepper. Alternatively, transparent layers such as an oxide dielectric and a photoresist may be applied after etching. The projecting elements formed by etching remain visible through the transparent layers and similarly allow optical location.

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